

# CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 13, 2011

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## ***Mayor Healy: Council's Inaction Will Result in Higher Taxes and More Layoffs***

***Donnelly, Fulop, Lopez, & Richardson's "No" vote to Introduce an Ordinance to  
move Retirees into the Direct Access Health Care Plan will Cost the city \$3.2 million***

**JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy** expressed extreme disappointment today with four members of the City Council who voted no on a critical cost-saving ordinance.

The ordinance would have moved the city's approximately 1,900 retirees – of which 340 still live in Jersey City – to the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Direct Access plan from the more costly Traditional health benefits plan. Already, all of the city's employees have been transferred to the direct access plan, as have all state employees and retirees. **The move would have saved the city approximately \$3.2 million this year and every year forward.**

Ironically, had the city remained in the state administered-health benefits plan, all retirees would already be in the direct access plan.

"The vote to introduce this ordinance was the right thing to do for the taxpayers of this city," said **Mayor Healy**. "In this new Great Depression, we are forced to look at every possible avenue to bring relief to the taxpayers. This was a measure that could do that, with little impact. Unfortunately, four members of our City Council are not willing to do what is right for this city."

At Wednesday's Council meeting, where the ordinance was up for first reading to introduce, **Councilmen Donnelly (Ward B) and Fulop (Ward E), and Councilwomen Lopez (Ward C) and Richardson (Ward F)**, all voted not to introduce even though the Council would have had at least two additional weeks to address any concerns with the administration.

"We have thoroughly examined this issue, on a legal and financial basis, and have determined this is the best course of action for the city and its taxpayers," added **Mayor Healy**. "Any questions that the Council had were not expressed to the administration prior to the meeting and by voting no, they closed the door on this ordinance for at least six months."

Retirees would have maintained the same level of service under the direct access plan, and those who did not want to give up the traditional plan would have had the opportunity to keep the plan, but pay the difference in premiums.

**All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///**